

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 /140 W

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R 031851Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6059

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UK, SOV

SUBJECT: BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY, SIR ALEC DOUGLAS-
HOME VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION

1. DECEMBER 3 LONDON "TIMES" CONTAINED MOSCOW "TIMES"
CORRESPONDENT REPORT OF SIR ALEC'S VISIT. REPORT
MENTIONED LOW KEY CAUTIOUS SOVIET APPROACH TO VISIT,
SOVIET INTEREST IN COOPERATION WITH BRITAIN IN
INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ARENA AND BRITISH INTEREST IN
IMPROVING ANGLO-SOVIET RELATIONS AND "PRACTICAL
RESULTS" OF VISIT.

2. PAGE FIVE ARTICLE IN "TIMES" BY DIPLOMATIC
CORRESPONDENT RENDEL, BASED ON FCO BRIEFING, DISCUSSES
VISIT. ARTICLE MAKES MENTION OF FACT THAT SIR ALEC
INVITED IN 1970 BUT VISIT PRECLUDED BY BRITISH
EXPULSION OF 105 SOVIET DIPLOMATS. FCO POINTS OUT
THAT GRADUALLY SINCE 1970 ANGLO-SOVIET RELATIONS HAVE
IMPROVED AND SOVIET DIPLOMATS REALIZE THAT BRITISH
ATTITUDES AT RECENT EXCHANGES HAVE NOT BEEN POLEMICAL.
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THE PRESENT VISIT TAKES PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF

DEVELOPING OFFICIAL CONTACT AND A REASONABLE PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTRIES. BRITISH MAKE A POINT OF STATING THAT THE VISIT OPENS IN A LOW KEY AS THEIR DELEGATION DOES NOT WANT "AN ATMOSPHERE OF PUBLIC BONHOMIE WHICH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT MIGHT LATER CHARACTERIZE AS THE SPIRIT OF MOSCOW AND FOLLOW UP WITH CHARGES OF A BREACH BY BRITAIN OF THE MOSCOW SPIRIT." FCO REPORTEDLY BELIEVES SOVIETS WANT AN ATMOSPHERE WHICH WILL FACILITATE FORCE CUTS BY THE U.S. IN EUROPE AND MAKE IT HARDER FOR THE EUROPEAN ALLIES TO OFFSET THEM. FCO CONCLUSION IS THAT "SIR ALEC IS HOPING TO MAKE CLEAR THE WESTERN ATTITUDE TO DETENTE AND COEXISTENCE. BOTH HE WILL ARGUE SHOULD LEAD TO GENUINE COOPERATION, THOUGH IN THE BRITISH VIEW THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT STILL REGARDS COEXISTENCE AS A CONTINUING STRUGGLE BY ALL MEANS SHORT OF WAR."

3. SIR ALEC IS TO RETURN FROM MOSCOW ON WEDNESDAY EVENING.

ANNENBERG

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